officials, the most spectacular of which were in February, 1936, they strove to purge the government of the elements to which they were opposed. Increasingly the control of the army and navy was passing into the hands of extremists, fanatical militarists who dreamed of the expansion of the empire, the expulsion of Western influence from China and, indeed, from all the Far East, and the knitting of East Asia, later enlarged to "Greater East Asia," into a "Co-prosperity Sphere" in whose benefits all its members would share—but in which Japan would hold the hegemony. The chauvinists did not immediately gain full control, but more and more they became the dominant force.

In July, 1937, the Japanese army, presumably emboldened by its increasing power at home and determined on positive action which would commit the nation and press forward the borders of the Japanese sphere before the mounting Chinese resistance could become more formidable, took a further step which precipitated a momentous and titanic struggle. Now, as in September, 1931, what on its face was a minor incident was utilized as the occasion for a decisive move. On the night of July 7, a clash occurred on the edge of Peking between Chinese troops and Japanese who were executing training maneuvers in a section where they had no treaty right to be. Although locally the Chinese were disposed to be conciliatory and to withdraw their troops, punish the responsible officers, and suppress anti-Japanese activities, the Japanese army rushed reinforcements into Hopei. Possibly it had hoped that hostilities could be confined to the North and that it could employ the opportunity to make effective its ambitions in

the northeast of China proper and Inner Mongolia. Late in the month the Japanese took Peking. They expanded their operations in Hopei, Chahar, Suiyiian, and Shansi. In the last named province they encountered formidable resistance from the Communists, now (August, 1937) in theory incorporated into the national forces as the Eighth Route Army. Yet, apart from the Communist obstacle, they appeared to be having their own way.

However, the war could not be confined to the North. Apparently the Japanese had underestimated the degree to which the spirit of nationalism had permeated the country. No longer, as during the Anglo-Chinese wars of the preceding century or even as recently as the suppression of the Boxers, could foreign troops